

# Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Primary School

Mere Lane, Armthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN3 2DB

**Inspection dates**

5–6 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have not taken effective action to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.
- Governors cannot account for the lack of progress made since the last inspection. They do not challenge leaders well. They are too inclined to make excuses.
- Leaders do not check the quality of teaching regularly or thoroughly enough. Teachers do not receive the challenge and support that would help them to improve.
- Middle leaders are under-developed. They do not have the knowledge, skills or training needed to help them contribute to improving the school.
- Teachers do not challenge the most-able pupils, including the most-able disadvantaged pupils, well enough. Most of these pupils do not reach the high standards of which they are capable.
- Teaching varies in how well it meets the needs of pupils. Consequently, too many pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, do not make enough progress in a range of subjects.
- Provision in the early years continues to require improvement. The activities adults plan do not make sufficient demands on children, or sustain their interest.

### The school has the following strengths

- The school actively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders and teachers prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They feel safe and enjoy school.
- The teaching of early reading has improved. Pupils learn to read with fluency and expression.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management, including governance, by:
  - making more regular and systematic checks on the quality of teaching
  - coaching and training middle leaders so they make a tangible difference to the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes
  - ensuring governors receive the training they need to fulfil their duties well
  - improving the quality of the information governors receive and ensuring they are tenacious in challenging leaders
  - sharpening improvement planning, identifying more precise outcomes, and identifying who will check progress, when and how.
- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment so that all groups of pupils, including the disadvantaged, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most-able, make good progress, by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what the most-able pupils should achieve in every year group
  - improving the accuracy of assessment at all stages of pupils' development
  - using assessment more effectively to identify those pupils who have the potential to reach the highest standards
  - making sure pupils develop conceptual understanding in mathematics, then deepening learning before moving them on
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to practice challenging mathematical problems in a range of subjects
  - providing more regular opportunities for pupils to write at length and with purpose in a range of subjects
  - helping pupils to use their increasing knowledge of grammar to vary sentence structures when writing
  - increasing the challenge for pupils of all abilities in all other subjects as well as English and mathematics.
- Improve early years provision by:
  - providing better support and guidance for the early years teacher and other adults, and checking regularly that teaching and learning is improving
  - improving the range and quality of resources both inside and outside

- making sure that areas of provision and activities challenge children in all aspects of their development, and sustain their interest
- improving the ways adults interact with children, particularly the questions adults ask children to help them think and speak at greater length
- involving parents more in their children's learning and assessment.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Leaders' efforts to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been ineffective. These were to improve the progress of the most-able pupils and to improve provision in the early years. These aspects of the school's work are no better than they were nearly five years ago.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching have not been thorough. Senior leaders have taken some steps to involve middle leaders in this work, but checking is infrequent and superficial. Middle leaders have not been trained well enough to carry out their duties effectively. These weaknesses are the main reason inconsistencies in teaching have not been tackled effectively.
- School improvement planning is not sharp enough. Leaders do not identify precise outcomes that would assure leaders and governors that teaching and achievement are improving. Plans do not identify who will check actions are making a difference, how they will check, and how often.
- Since taking up post, the headteacher has put in place many essential systems that did not exist on her arrival, such as improved arrangements for setting targets for teachers' performance, and processes for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. However, many of these systems are still developing, so have not improved teaching or the rate of pupils' progress.
- Leaders recognise that some assessments of pupils' attainment are inaccurate. Leaders cannot say whether differences between the achievement of groups such as the disadvantaged and other pupils are reducing. Leaders have not properly evaluated the effect that the use of pupil premium funds have had on the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- The sports premium funds are put to effective use. Pupils enjoy regular tuition from a sports coach. Leaders do not do enough to evaluate the impact of this on pupils' achievements in physical education.
- Senior and middle leaders have together planned a broad and balanced curriculum that stimulates pupils' interest and curiosity. Visits to places of interest and events, such as the recent visit to the Doncaster Book Awards, broaden pupils' horizons. Pupils enjoy learning facts in subjects such as science, geography and history. However, teachers do not challenge pupils, especially the most-able pupils, or deepen pupils' thinking enough in these subjects.
- Leaders and teachers actively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils elect school councillors who take their work seriously. For example, school council members are currently reviewing the anti-bullying policy and considering how it can be even better. Year 6 pupils visited the Holocaust Centre during the inspection. They are helped to make links with current issues such as radicalisation and extremism.
- Lack of challenge from external partners, including the local partnerships of schools

and the local authority, has led leaders and governors into believing teaching and pupils' outcomes are better than they are. This has lured leaders into a false sense of security.

## **Governance of the school**

- The governing body has too optimistic a view of how the school is doing. The governors do not have a detailed enough knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and pupils' achievement, so they have been ineffective in challenging leaders. Governors cannot explain why the weaker areas of the school's performance have not improved.
- Governors have an inaccurate view of the progress disadvantaged pupils make, because leaders have not evaluated this properly. Leaders have not given detailed enough information to the governing body.
- Governors have not carried out rigorous enough checks on whether leaders are following statutory guidance regarding the recruitment and vetting of adults. The governing body keeps track of other basic statutory duties such as checking and agreeing policies and keeping an eye on the finances of the school.
- Some governors have the skills and expertise needed to govern effectively given better training. However, the large governing body has too many members who are not making a difference.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff are trained in the tell-tale signs that would suggest a child is being harmed or at risk. Adults report concerns promptly. Leaders keep a detailed record of these concerns and of any conversations with parents and external agencies. Leaders take timely action to make sure children get the help they need.
- Leaders corrected administrative shortcomings in the school's central record of recruitment checks during the inspection. Some other aspects of record keeping, for example fire evacuation records, need to be still tighter. A few lunchtime staff, though vigilant, were not as conversant with reporting procedures as they should be.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

## **Requires improvement**

- Teaching is hit and miss because teachers do not take enough account of what pupils can already do. Some work is well suited to the needs of some pupils and some is not. This results in variable progress for all groups of pupils including disadvantaged pupils. Some pupils make good progress, but the vast majority do not. Lack of adaptation in lessons means the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language varies. The most-able pupils occasionally sit through explanations they do not need, or do work that is too easy. This is a hindrance to them making good progress.
- Inconsistencies in teachers' practice hampers pupils' progress. For example, there are occasions where teachers check pupils' work and help them to overcome

misunderstandings, but some teachers do not check carefully or intervene quickly enough. Some written feedback in pupils' workbooks is effective, where teachers stick to the school's policy, and some less so.

- Teachers' expectations of the most-able pupils are too low. Some weak subject knowledge means teachers do not know what activities to set these pupils to deepen their learning or challenge their thinking. As a result, these pupils do not make good progress.
- In mathematics, teachers have begun to provide more challenging problems for pupils to solve. This has not been consistent enough for pupils to develop the staying power needed to keep going and enable them to make good progress. Furthermore, in each class, there are pupils struggling with their mathematics because they have missed out on earlier basic understanding. This means they battle on, attempting calculations without understanding why the method works. Teachers provide few opportunities for pupils to attempt mathematics in other subjects such as science.
- Grammar teaching is not well enough developed to help pupils attempt a range of sentence structures. This results in the most-able pupils writing mostly simple sentences, rather than varying sentences for special effect. In addition, pupils are not given enough opportunities to write at length and for a purpose in other subjects. This means they do not learn to sustain writing quality throughout a longer piece.
- Teaching of other subjects such as science, history and geography engages pupils who are sometimes enthused by the content of lessons. Pupils enjoy learning facts. However, teachers too often do not provide challenging tasks to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. As a result, their progress is not good.
- The teaching of early reading is effective. Pupils learn to read with fluency and expression. Weaker readers use their skills in linking letters to sounds to work out words they do not know, because they have been taught this skill well. Pupils largely enjoy reading.
- Some teaching assistants work effectively alongside pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, and some less so.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- When teaching is not well matched to pupils' needs, pupils lose interest or become frustrated. Pupils were seen to lose concentration and engage in noisy off task behaviour.
- Most pupils demonstrate open-minded attitudes to different ways of life. They show a reasonable knowledge of different faiths. However, their knowledge about gender issues and different sorts of family relationships is limited.
- Pupils are happy in school. The youngest children are content to leave their parents and they settle quickly. Year 6 pupils do a great job of looking after the new Reception

class children at lunchtime. They line up with them, holding their hands, and enjoy eating lunch together. They help the young children clear away their plates.

- Pupils feel safe in school. They say that bullying is rare and that if it does happen, adults are good at sorting things out. Pupils learn about how to keep safe on-line and what to do if they were to experience on-line bullying.
- Pupils develop confidence in this caring school. They make eye contact with visitors, engaging them in conversation. Interactions between adults and pupils are warm and positive. Staff care for children and are attentive to their needs.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Attendance, although above average, fell last year. Pupils who are disadvantaged are more likely not to attend school than their peers. Pupils who are disadvantaged are persistently absent more, and in the past year more of them have become persistently absent.
- Children in the early years generally behave well, though often they are 'policed' by adults and are not able to develop the self-discipline needed to ensure they behave well when not with adults.
- Pupils can follow instructions. They line up when asked. They behave well in the lunch hall, chatting calmly while they eat. In assemblies, pupils sit and listen attentively.
- Pupils dress smartly in their uniforms. They are polite, holding doors open. They say 'please' and 'thank you'.
- There are very few incidences of name calling or use of inappropriate language. Adults take this seriously. As a consequence, pupils do not repeat this.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Teachers' assessment has not been accurate enough, including assessment on entry to Reception class. Because of this, teachers' aspirations have not been sufficiently high at each stage of pupils' development. Leaders and teachers do not identify those pupils who are the most able, so these pupils do not make good progress.
- The progress of all groups of pupils is variable because teachers do not make the best use of assessment information. Recent end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 outcomes, and the work in pupils' workbooks, confirm that while most pupils made expected progress, too few have made greater than expected progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils generally make expected progress but too few make the rates of progress that would enable them to catch up with other pupils nationally. This includes the most-able disadvantaged pupils.
- An increasing proportion of pupils on roll speak English as an additional language. Some of these pupils enter school with good English speaking skills, others less so. However, leaders and teachers are too inclined to see learning English as an additional

language as a barrier to learning rather than a benefit, so do not expect these pupils to do as well as they are able.

- Outcomes in early reading have improved because of improved phonics teaching (letters and the sounds they make) in the early years and Year 1.
- Most pupils reach nationally expected standards by the time they leave the school so are reasonably well prepared for secondary school. However, more pupils could do so much better given consistently good teaching.

## Early years provision

## Requires improvement

- Provision in the early years is not significantly better than it was at the time of the last inspection.
- Not all areas of learning are represented inside and outside. Some resources are becoming a little worn out. Resources are not arranged in a way that makes sufficient demands on children as they play and explore. Because these resources do not stimulate children enough, children lose interest and do not concentrate for long. There is lack of physical challenge to develop children's body movement skills.
- Adult interactions with children as they play and explore, do not encourage children to speak at length. This especially does not meet the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Adults sometimes miss learning opportunities. Furthermore, adults sometimes control children's activity too much so children do not get to follow their own interests or to be inquisitive. As a result, children do not make good progress in the early years.
- Nobody in the school has the real expertise to lead the early years foundation stage effectively. For this reason, leaders have drawn on the skills of external professionals. This has resulted in some improvements in the physical environment over the last several months and more support is planned.
- Parents are positive about the way their children settle into school quickly, and appreciate the chance to come into the classroom each morning to help their children get a good start to the day. Adults gather information from parents about what the children can do before they start school.
- Adults have historically recorded assessments of children on entry to school as lower than they actually are. There has been no external validation of entry assessment and leaders in school have not checked for themselves whether assessments are accurate. The view of inspectors is that children enter school with skills, knowledge and understanding that is generally typical for their age. Though the proportion of pupils by the end of the early years is in line with the national average, too few pupils make more than typical progress from their starting points. Most pupils are generally ready for learning in Year 1 and a minority exceed the early learning goals in some areas of learning.
- Despite weaknesses in entry assessment, assessment of the children is improving. Adults are beginning to get a fuller picture of each child's development that is leading to assessment that is more accurate. The early years team are working closely together



and communicate assessments increasingly effectively.

- Children are safe and well cared for in the early years.

## School details

Unique reference number	106774
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10019296

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	165
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lionel Axup
Headteacher	Clare Mainon
Telephone number	01302 833941
Website	<a href="http://www.ourladysorrows.doncaster.sch.uk/">www.ourladysorrows.doncaster.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@ourladysorrows.doncaster.sch.uk">admin@ourladysorrows.doncaster.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	21–22 November 2011

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Primary School is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is less than half the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is in line with the national average, having increased considerably in the last few years. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with average.
- The school meets the current floor standards. These are the minimum expectations of

pupils' achievement in English and mathematics set by the government.

- The current headteacher took up post in 2013.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes more than once to observe pupils' learning. Some of these observations took place with the headteacher.
- Inspectors questioned pupils about their learning and what it is like to be a pupil at the school. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' workbooks from the current and previous school years, and listened to a few pupils read. Pupils' behaviour was observed around the school, including at break times and at lunchtime.
- Discussions took place with the headteacher and other school leaders and teachers, several members of the governing body, and a local authority representative.
- The inspectors listened to the views of several parents during the inspection. There were 37 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- The inspector considered four responses to the staff questionnaire and 40 responses to the pupil online questionnaire
- Documents were analysed, including school development plans, governing body minutes and information about pupils' achievement.
- Records relating to attendance and safeguarding were scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Philip Riozzi, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Phil Smith	Her Majesty's Inspector
Clare McGarey	Ofsted Inspector

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